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WILLIE ROGERS,

OR

TEMPER IMPROVED.

Second Edition.

By Anna Wright

BOSTON:
SAMUEL G. SIMPKINS.
1845.

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WILLIE ROGERS,

OR

TEMPER IMPROVED.

EVIL FOR EVIL.

'WHY, Willie! what a face! And what is the matter with that little thumb that you are hugging so closely?'

'Naughty, naughty old puss!' cried Willie, in a loud, cross voice—'you need not hide under the sofa, Mrs. Puss; I shall take my papa's long whip, and drive you out. You must be put into the dark closet, naughty puss!'

'Come here, Willie,' said his mother. 'Do you see this curious insect on the window?'

'Oh! mother! it is a wasp. Are you not afraid?'

'No. If I do not hurt him, he will not hurt

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me.' Just then the wasp, in buzzing about, happened to come down on Willie's neck. 'Stand perfectly still, my child,' said his mother, 'and he will not sting you.'

Willie obeyed, but with a very anxious face. Presently the little creature crawled from his neck to his sleeve, and then buzzed away to the window again. Willie's mother opened the window, and brushed him out with her handkerchief.

'How glad he is to be free again,' she said. 'He could not find anything to eat on my Willie's shoulder.'

'He is an ugly thing! I am glad he is gone,' cried Willie. 'Why did you not knock him down, and step on him, mamma? Becky always does.'

'Does Becky do right always?'

'I guess not, indeed! But she says she will not let the wicked wasps come to sting me,—no, she won't! And so she puts her foot on them; but sometimes she takes the tongs, and pinches them, or puts them into the fire.'

'And my kind-hearted little boy does not like to see her do it, I hope.'

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'No, mother; so I don't. But I thought it was right, because—'

'Because wasps have stings?'

'Yes.'

'But you see they do no harm, if you let them alone.'

'But I might hurt one without intending to do it.'

'True. Once I took hold of the window curtain, so; and a little wasp that happened to be on the other side of it, let me know very quickly that he was there, by a sharp prick on my finger. I dropped the curtain, and down fell the wasp at my feet. I did not hurt him. A little vinegar soon made my finger well again.'

'But, mother! ought you not to have killed him, that he might not sting anybody so again?'

'If the wasp could speak, what would he say to that?'

'I don't know. What would he?'

'Pretty well, too, Mr. Willie Rogers, if I must be killed lest you should hurt me accidentally.'

'Well—I wish there were no wasps in the world.'

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'Pretty well, too, Mr. Willie Rogers; I wish there were no Beckies, and no Willie Rogerses.'

'Very fair, Mr. Wasp!' cried Willie, laughing, and capering about. 'Oh, ho! See mother! puss has come out from under the sofa, and is lying down in the sunshine. How comfortable she looks, stretched out on the carpet! Look, mother; my thumb bleeds a little, still, where she scratched me. See that little red bead!'

'Naughty, cross old puss!' said his mother, frowning and pouting. Willie looked up in her face with a droll smile.

'Did I look so, mother? Let me see my face in the cover of your work-box. Oh! I can't scowl, because I am laughing. I can't help laughing all the time to think how you looked, making a great lip, so! There—just so, mother!'

'Did you not think it becoming?'

'Oh, mother—what a funny woman you are!'

'But why, Mrs. Puss, should you scratch a kind little boy like my Willie?'

Puss could not answer, so Willie spoke for

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her. 'Why, I pulled her tail, because she would not play with my marble; and she mewed—'

'That was her way of saying, "Oh! you hurt me, Willie."'

'And I pulled it again, and then she turned round and put her claw on my thumb as quick —oh, how quick!'

'And that was her way to punish you a little, for hurting her on purpose.'

'Now you love me again, don't you, pussy?' said the little boy, lying down, and rubbing his cheek over her smooth fur. Pussy purred, and rubbed her head against him in return.

A QUARREL.

One day Mrs. Rogers heard a loud scream in the kitchen. She threw down her work, and ran out. Did she not think her little Willie was hurt,—that he was scalded, perhaps, or burnt? Oh, no! She knew that it was not a scream of pain. Was he in danger, or frightened? No; it was not a scream of terror.

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She soon came in, leading Willie, with his face very red, and covered with tears. She opened the closet door. Willie took a cricket from under the sofa, carried it into the closet, and drew the door after him. Presently he pushed it open. 'Naughty, ugly Becky,' he began—

'I will fasten the door, my son,' said his mother, quietly, 'and when you are ready to have it opened, you can knock, you know, and I shall be glad to come and open it for you.'

Willie understood very well what this meant. He sat sobbing for some time. Then came some long sighs, and at last he called out to his mother, but without asking to be let out, 'mother! will you not let me talk to you? Becky—'

'Not about Becky, till you are quite yourself again.'

'Well, I won't then. But I know who ought to be in the closet as well as I. I don't love her at all.'

Mrs. Rogers said nothing. If she had spoken she would have said, 'You do not feel quite like a good boy, yet.' But she thought he knew it very well, without being told.

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A long time passed, but all was still in the closet. She listened, and at last opened the door. There lay Willie, sound asleep! She took him up gently, and laid him on the sofa. He had not lain there long, before he was waked by pussy's little rough tongue, licking his cheek.

'Oh, you roguish puss,' said Willie's mother, when she saw she had waked the sleeper. Willie stretched himself, and gaped, looking very stupid and sleepy. So Mrs. Rogers laid down her work, and went and took him into her lap, and laid his head on her shoulder. Presently, Becky came in to lay the table. She looked surprised to see Willie in his mother's arms.

'I am very sorry you are sick,' she said, as she looked at his heavy, half-shut eyes; 'Poor little Willie! can I do anything for you?'

Willie laughed, and said, 'No, thank you, Doctor Becky.' And presently he jumped down, and began to help her spread the crumb-cloth, and trundle out the table. Becky smiled, and called him a nice little man, adding, 'this is much better, is n't it, than kicking and slapping me?'

Willie looked very sad at this, and went

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slowly back to his mother, and climbing up into her lap, hid his face on her shoulder.

'Now you may tell me if you wish, what made you so angry with Becky.' Mrs. Rogers did not say this till Becky had gone out of the room.

Willie was silent.

'What did Becky do? I can trust you, now that you are not angry; I know you will tell me the whole truth. Who was wrong?'

'I was. But I was in fun at first.'

'What did you do?'

'Becky was washing the floor, and I ran all over it, to make tracks; and Becky told me not to—but I did it again. Then she ran after me, to catch me, and put me out of the kitchen. I ran all about, and when she caught me, she hurt my arm, and—and—'

'Is that all?'

'And so I screamed, and—I am very sorry—I kicked and slapped her, to make her let me go.'

'I do not see that Becky was *much* to blame—'

'Why did you not let me tell you when I was in the closet?'

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'Because you began so—"naughty, ugly Becky!"—and I knew you would lay all the blame upon her. Little boys, and even grown people, are never just when in a passion.'

'And now I rather think, mother, that Becky did not mean to hurt me at all.'

'If she did, would that make it right for you to hurt her in return?'

'No—for I know I must not return evil for evil.'

'How long must I keep you from going into the kitchen to play?'

'Oh, mother! why must not I go into the kitchen?'

'Ask yourself, my honest little boy.'

'Because Becky makes me mad.'

'No—guess again.'

'Because, if Becky makes me mad, I return evil for evil. But I will try not to, any more.'

'I am afraid you will forget to try. I cannot trust you.'

'But, mother, how can I try, if I stay all the time with you? For you are always kind. I am always a good boy, or a *pretty* good boy, with you.'

'Well, my dear Willie, you have given me

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a good reason. I will allow you to go into the kitchen again. Hark! Becky is coming with the tea. Open the door for her—run—quick!'

Willie opened the door, and then ran out to the kitchen to bring in the cream and the butter, smiling very lovingly upon Becky. He seemed to be silently asking her forgiveness, and Becky understood him just as well as if he had said, 'Becky, I am sorry.'

A WARNING.

At tea, Willie's father pinched his cheek softly, saying, 'Been good to-day, Willie boy?'

Willie's face was crimson in a moment. He looked down into his plate, his lip quivered, and tears began to shine under his long eyelashes. He wished his father would not ask any further just then.

'Any news to-day?' asked Mrs. Rogers.

'Tom Walker has procured for himself a handsome beating, if that may be considered news,' said Mr. Rogers, handing her his cup.

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Tom Walker was a man who lived near, in the handsomest house in the town. His passionate temper was well known, even to Willie.

Willie wondered what *procured* meant, and what kind of beating it was that might be called handsome.

'Oh! I am sorry for him!' exclaimed Willie's mother.

'Why—I don't pity him. It is his own fault. He struck a tall, two-fisted Irishman who was working for him, and the fellow pummelled him black and blue, that's all. I was half glad of it. I hope it will be a lesson to him.'

'But it will do no good.'

'At least he will learn to keep his hands off of other people.'

'As he did not learn that when he was a boy, I am afraid he never will, nor the Irishman either,' said Mrs. Rogers. Willie caught her eye, and smiled.

'Did he have any mother?' asked Willie.

'Not such a mother as yours,' said his father, laughing. 'Willie, how you would laugh, if she were to tell you to whip the naughty table, because you had bumped your little pate against it.'

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'Did his mother do so?'

'Oh, I don't know—but I think it very likely, for I have seen him, since he was a man grown, stamp and kick against an innocent door, in which he carelessly pinched his fingers. I shall not tell you what he *said* to the door.'

'A great man talk to a door! what a funny man. What did he say?'

'I said I could not repeat it.'

'But what could it be? Was it *naughty, ugly door?*'

'Something more foolish than that. He swore at the door.'

'*Swore?*' repeated Willie, looking puzzled. '*Swore*, father?'

His father did not seem to hear him; he looked very thoughtful, and Willie turned his eyes to his mother's face.

'I cannot explain it to you now, Willie,' she said. 'Indeed,' she continued, speaking to her husband, 'it seems hardly possible for the mind of a child to conceive of such an unnatural mixture of folly and impiety as the practice of swearing exhibits.'

Just then Willie felt something pulling his gown. It was puss. She was standing on her hind feet; and with one paw on his chair, she

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carded his gown with the other, to call his notice. Willie jumped down, and ran to the closet for a little saucer which his mother had given him for puss. It was one which had belonged to a flower-pot, and it had a foot to stand upon, like a wine-glass, or vase. Into this his mother poured some cream, and a little water, and gave it to Willie. He did not set it down upon the carpet, where it might be overset, or stepped on. No, pussy knew better than to expect that. Off she ran to the door, with her head and tail up, and her back arched. Willie moved slowly, and she came back to meet him, and whirled round him two or three times, rubbing hard against his legs. At last she made him look away from the milk, and a few drops were spilt over the side, ran down upon the foot, and dropped upon the carpet.

'There, puss!' he began in an impatient tone, but he stopped himself, and, as his mother came and opened the door to help him, he said, pleasantly, 'I could not help spilling a little, mother, I was so afraid I should tread on pussy.'

'There is no great harm done,' said his mother, in a kind tone; 'I will excuse you as readily as you have forgiven puss.'

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PUNISHMENT NOT VENGEANCE.

'Come, Willie, it is bedtime,' said Mrs. Rogers, holding open the heavy yard gate. 'Come, come.'

But Willie, who was playing he was a colt, only shook his head, kicked up his heels, and cantered away.

'Well—well! suppose I shut the gate, and leave you out there all night.'

'I am not afraid of the dark,' shouted Willie; God will take care of me.'

'La, Miss Rogers,' cried Becky, from the kitchen window, 'I'll catch him, and fetch him in quick.'

'No, I thank you. How often have I told you, Becky, that force is unnecessary, and worse than unnecessary.'

'Well, I think you 've the patience of Job. I 'd never stand there waiting.'

Willie was capering, and caracoling, and trotting in a circle all this time, with his eye on his mother.

'My arm aches, Willie, holding this heavy gate.'

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He flew to her in a moment, put his hand into hers, and went up to bed without a murmur, though he was not at all sleepy.

'Oh! mother!' cried he, as he sank down into his comfortable little bed, 'I did not know how tired I was. Bed feels so soft, I am glad to lie down in it, after all.'

'Don't you wish all little tired boys could rest on such a good bed?'

'Oh yes. Mother, why does not God give the little poor boys all the things I have? I wish he would!'

'My dear little boy, you may pray that he will give them the comforts they need.'

Willie clasped his hands, and repeated his usual prayer, adding with a full heart, a petition for poor children.

'Won't you stay and talk with me a little while, dear mother?' asked he, as she was about to leave the chamber.

'I suppose the lamps are not yet lighted below,' said his mother, sitting down upon the bed. 'I can spare a few minutes in the twilight, though I am very busy, working for a certain little boy.'

'I know who.'

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'Don't you think then, he ought to have come in directly, when I called him?'

'Oh—I was only in fun.'

'Is it good fun to be disobedient?'

'Oh mother, I was not disobedient! I was playing I was a horse whom his master could not catch. Did you think I was disobedient?'

'Why—no—not exactly. But it was so much like it, that Becky was very much vexed. I felt impatient, myself, having to wait so long to be obeyed. She thought I ought to punish you.'

'That is just like Becky. She always wants to return evil for evil.'

'Do you think *punishment* is returning evil for evil?'

'I think Becky's punishing is.'

'What is the difference between hers and mine?'

'Why—I know, but I cannot tell.'

'Shall I tell you?'

'Yes; but will you, if you please, tell me first what my punishment is to be for not coming directly?'

'My sweet boy, I am not going to punish you at all. It was not I, but Becky, that

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thought Master Willie ought to suffer for keeping me waiting at the street door.'

'I am sorry I did, mother.'

'I am convinced of it, my dear little affectionate boy. I knew you would not give me any uneasiness wilfully.'

'And, mother, you never punish me for making a noise when you have the headach. I don't always mean to, but I forget. And to-day, when I stepped on your foot, and hurt you, and soiled your nice stocking, you only said, 'Oh, careless Willie!' and I felt dreadfully. I love you, mother, dearly, but I don't love Becky very well.'

'But *I* do.'

'Why, I heard you tell Mrs. —— yesterday, that Becky had not a good temper.'

'Poor Becky, must she therefore have nobody to love her? Nobody to help her, when she is weary with hard work—nobody to feel for her when she is in pain—nobody to thank her for her kindness? Poor Becky!'

'*I* will, mother—yes, I do love her.'

'And to-morrow she will get up early and make our breakfast, while we, who have not had so much to make us tired, are sleeping soundly.'

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'And perhaps she will bake me a little cake, mother; she does sometimes.'

'Yes, she loves to give you pleasure; and if she does speak sharply to you, when she is out of humor, you can learn not to be angry, can't you?'

'Yes—I promised to try, you know. I am not going to be like the wasp, nor like puss. They do not know they must not return evil for evil.'

'Well! that is a good thing to remember. My Willie will not be a little wasp. So if I see him inclined to be waspish, I shall just buzz a little, to remind him.'

'Oh how funny it will be! But I do not mean you shall have a chance, very soon,' said Willie, as his mother kissed his cheek and bade him good night.

A NEW PLAYMATE.

It was a cold winter evening, two or three years after this, that Mrs. Rogers came in from abroad, and laid aside her hood and cloak.

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Her husband looked up from his book and said, 'Where is Becky? Did you come home alone?'

'I left Becky, for I thought I could do without her a few days—'

'My dear wife, I must say, I think it was thoughtless in you, to undertake so much, this severe cold weather. You will be sick yourself, I prophecy. It was ill-judged, kind though it was.'

'I had half a mind to bring home the little girl, too—they are in such distress there. I think poor Sally will not live many days.'

'How old is the little thing?'

'Two years younger than Willie.'

'It is a pity she is not old enough to be put out at service.'

'Yes, it is a pity. But—'

'There is nobody to take charge of her, and she must go to the workhouse, I suppose—or, stay—shall we find her a boarding-place? The town will allow something, and I will pay the rest.'

'Sally was a faithful girl when she lived with us.'

'Very.'

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'Kind in sickness—very kind, when we thought we were to lose our little Willie.'

'Well, what then? I see my plan does not come up to your wishes.'

'You remember what you were saying yesterday, when I said Willie was a thoroughly good-tempered little fellow.'

'I said that he had no temptation to be otherwise, now that he and Becky understood each other so nicely. There is no one to cross his path, to interfere with his plays, or put him out of his way.'

'And therefore he is in a fair way to grow selfish. My plan is, to take this little girl into the house as a companion for him.'

'It will be a great care to you.'

'Ah, well, somebody must take care of a motherless child, you know, and why not I?'

'Do as you please—I do not object,' said Mr. Rogers, turning back to his book with a smile.

'Oh, that smile seems to say I shall soon be tired of my undertaking.'

'Oh, no. But do you not foresee some trouble with Becky?'

'She is kind-hearted. Besides, it will not

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do always to wait for it to be perfectly convenient, before we resolve to do a kind action.'

'I am sure Willie cannot learn any selfishness from his mother,' said Mr. Rogers. 'Let little Sarah come; I, for one, will give her a welcome.'

A few days after this, Becky came home, bringing the little orphan. Willie's heart was full of pity for her, for he had been told that she had lost her mother. He ran to meet her, with open arms, but the little stranger turned away from him, and clung to Becky. Willie gazed at her with a sorrowful look, but presently began to feel inclined to smile, and ran off into the parlor to his mother.

'Oh, mother,' he cried, 'Sarah is come.'

'I will come out presently. Go and try to make her feel at home.'

'She will not look at me, mother, and she had rather be with Becky, I know. And, mother,' he said, sinking his voice, as if she was within hearing, 'I can't help laughing, too —and I am afraid she would see me laugh.'

'Do you remember, my child, that she has not a friend in the world, but us?'

'Yes—but then she looks *so* funny! Her

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hair is almost white, and is turned up behind with a comb. Her gown is so long, it trails on the floor, and only the toes of her shoes peep out. And her nose, and mouth, and cheeks are as red as fire, and she looked as frightened as if she thought I was going to hurt her, when I went to take hold of her hand.'

'Well, you may stay in here, Willie; I am going out to see if I can do anything to make her feel more happy.'

But Willie begged to be allowed to follow. Though Mrs. Rogers spoke very kindly to the little girl, she obtained no answer. She only turned her head away to hide her face in Becky's gown.

'Why don't you speak to the lady?' said Becky, taking her by the shoulders, and turning her round. She held down her head, and the tears slowly trickled down her cheeks.

'Now don't you make her speak when she does not want to,' said Willie, coming forward.

'She will soon get acquainted,' said Mrs. Rogers, gently. 'She will soon love us, for we will be very kind to her.'

The little girl raised her streaming eyes, and took one glance at Willie, and another at his

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mother. There was something very touching in the look—it seemed to say, 'I am alone in the world—will these strangers indeed be kind to me?'

'I would show her all my playthings, mother, but I think she does not care about them now. Perhaps she will like to see pussy. I will run and call her.'

The little girl followed his motions with her eyes, as he ran to one door, and then to another, calling 'Puss, puss, puss!' Pussy came, and with her assistance, Willie won a faint smile from the orphan. But she cried if Becky left the room a moment, and could not be prevailed on to speak.

TYRANNY.

In a few days, Sarah was quite at home, and as playful as a kitten; and when her hair was cut, her trailing robes abridged, and her face, which had been chapped by the united influence of weeping and exposure to the cold, had re-

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covered its natural delicate hue, she was quite winning in her appearance. She became as confiding as she had been fearful. Mr. Rogers himself could not resist her artless wiles to gain his notice. She would peep round the newspaper he was reading, and look up lovingly in his face, till he patted her cheek, or her head. Willie neglected his old play-fellow, puss, who it must be confessed, seemed very happy, nevertheless, having grand long naps on the rug undisturbed. Mrs. Rogers helped Willie teach Sarah her letters, and they found her both willing and bright as a scholar.

But when she had thus become a general pet, Becky suddenly grew jealous. She slept with Becky. She ate her bread and milk at Becky's table. But this was not enough. She claimed Sarah as her own at all times. The kitchen should be her home, she said, as it had been her mother's before her, and, little as she was, it was time for her to begin to learn to work. So, if her charge played in the parlor with Willie a half a day, Becky was sure to be sulky a week after it. Mrs. Rogers knew that without Becky's good will, all her plans for the child's welfare would fail. She had judged wisely, that

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the best chance for Sarah's being useful, independent and happy, was to train her for the same station in life that her mother had held. If she was to learn household work, Becky must be her teacher. Therefore, to keep her in good humor, the children generally played in the kitchen, or the yard, instead of being under the eye of Mrs. Rogers.

At first, this was of little consequence. Willie's plays had a new zest, now that he went through the whole circle of them with the idea of amusing Sarah. It was, 'Sarah, don't you want to see me trundle my hoop?' 'Sarah, shall I spin my humming top for you?' 'Shall I build you a block castle?' And Sarah said 'Yes!' with new glee at every proposal. But when there was no longer anything new to propose, she was not so delightfully passive and easy to amuse. 'I want the hoop!' 'I want to wind up the top!' 'Let me put on this brick here, and that block there,' she would say, when she very naturally became tired of merely looking on. 'No, no! you do not know how! I don't want you to touch,' Willie would cry, at the least meddling on her part, and often his voice was rather sharp in its tone.

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If Becky heard, she would command Sarah to give up to Willie at once, telling her it was *her place* to do it.

This was a great mistake of Becky's, and very wrong—but she did not know it. Willie would have known better, and would have scorned to take advantage of her interference, but that his selfishness was veiled from his own eyes. He felt vastly old and important, and wished Sarah to admire his superiority. He had never been to school, and his few occasional playfellows were all older than himself. He had always looked up to others, and he did not very well understand his new position, in having a companion younger than himself. He fancied she could hardly use her hands or feet. He wished to lead her whenever she moved—and to have her eyes turned upon him admiringly, whatever he was doing. He fancied himself the very pink of condescension and kindness, all the while. 'Remember, I am building this house entirely to please *you*, Sarah,' he would say, though in reality he was pleasing *himself* entirely. 'It is a great deal handsomer than any little girl could make, so don't you meddle.' If he was blowing soap-bubbles, he refused to

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lend her the pipe, because he could blow bigger ones than she could; and she might break the pipe, moreover, and so lose the pleasure of seeing them at all. If they played horse, he chose always to be driver, and was very impatient that his horse was so stupid, and so apt to fall down.

Even the show of generosity did not last long. Becky always regarded it as a matter of course that Master Willie was to have his own way. He was one of the nobler sex—had attained the discreet age of seven—was of high family—the owner of all the playthings—and, indirectly, master of the house, argued she. Willie, not being old enough to reason, very readily adopted these proud notions. Besides, the largest little pie or cake was always baked for him, the finest apple in Becky's gift was his as a matter of course, and he never doubted his right to the warmest seat by the kitchen fire.

The more gentle and sweet the little girl showed herself, the more overbearing and selfish Willie became, till, at last, tired of yielding every wish of her little heart, she became averse to playing with him.

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There was a sunny window in a recess in the kitchen, having a broad, low window-seat. On this, little Sarah one day made for herself a playhouse, as she called it, of such poor playthings as she could pick up, and Willie could not lay claim to. She would spend hours quietly amusing herself here, when not compelled by Becky to play with her young tyrant.

One day, Becky being employed in another part of the house, Sarah took advantage of it to make a stand. 'I will not be a passenger in your omnibus any more,' she said. 'It makes me tired to sit there so long. I don't want to ride. I want to play in my playhouse.'

'A fine playhouse!' exclaimed Willie. 'Let us see what you have got in it. Some bits of broken china! Holloa? And some paper dolls. Oh! how mother would laugh to see what great heads they have got! A handkerchief rolled up for a dolly. An old button with a peg through it—'

'That's my spinner! See how I can spin it.'

'No—let *me!* I can spin it best.'

'No, it is my own. Your mother made it for me when I first came to stay here.'

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This reference to his mother checked Willie, for he could not but think she would disapprove of his seizing it.

'Well, spin away then. I shan't look, however. But what are those tufts of green pine for? Brooms for your paper dollies, hey?'

'No, they're my polly-dancers. I blow them along, so—there! it has tumbled down.'

'Famous!'

'I wish you would go away.'

'I shan't, because you won't play omnibus.'

'No,—I won't play omnibus any more. And I don't want to play with you at all. I don't like to play with boys. Boys always play driver, and I hate to ride.'

'Gentlemen always take ladies to ride. Come—it shall be a chaise, and not an omnibus, and I will not holloa so loud, if you will get in; and you shall sit by me, and tell me where you want to go.'

'No—I don't want to ride at all.'

'You shall—I'll tell Becky.'

'Well, perhaps you will stay in the parlor with her. Don't you think you shall?'

'No. You'll see! I shall come out again

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directly, miss.' And away ran Willie, all in a fever, to the parlor.

A lady was there, making a call. Willie's face did not look particularly amiable as he entered. 'Why—my sweet Willie!' she exclaimed, 'I never saw a cloud upon your face before. I thought *you* were always pleasant.'

As she spoke, she put out her hand to draw him towards her. He flung away from her, hanging his head down sheepishly, and putting his finger in his mouth. His mother looked at him with an anxious and grieved look, but relieved him by turning the visitor's attention to some other object.

The longest call must come to an end; and after many a parting compliment, and last word, in the entry—on the step—and even at the gate, the final good-bye was exchanged. Willie ran to his mother as she closed the door.

"Now, mother, will you come and make Sarah play with me?'

'*Make* her play?' exclaimed Mrs. Rogers, '*make* Sarah play! Why, Willie! would it be *play* if she was *made* to do it?'

'I want her to go in my omnibus. I have not got any passengers. And she is *so* obstinate!'

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'But I have something for you to do first. Take your blocks, and build a house on the rug.'

'No—I don't want to. I am tired of my blocks. I wish they were all burnt up.'

'But I must insist upon it.'

'What for, mother? I don't want to.'

'I prefer you should do it.'

'Why should you wish me to, when it won't amuse me at all?'

'Do it.'

Willie obeyed, divided between wonder at this caprice of his mother's, and vexation at the delay it produced. He hastily piled up a few blocks, and on her not being satisfied, impatiently flung on a few more.

'Oh, build me a really handsome one, Willie, such as you used to build. A castle, or a bridge—'

'I can't because I don't feel interested in it, as I did then. I am disgusted with every brick I take up. I wish you would not *make* me do it.'

'Now, you see, my dear child, what it is to be *made* to play. You cannot take any pleasure in it. Neither would Sarah. Would you

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have me compel her to play, now that you see that forced play is no play at all? I hope you are not so selfish.'

Willie looked confounded. e considered it the greatest disgrace to be called selfish. He was silent for some time, thinking over Becky's rhetoric, to convince his own mind that he did not deserve it. But his temper was excited, and he was still strongly inclined to carry his point, and obtain a triumph over his unsubmissive playmate. So his meditations were not very likely to make him more reasonable.

His mother guessed this, and going to the closet, she took a basket, and began to pack it very deliberately with apples, cake, and jellies. Willie's curiosity was awakened, and his curly pate was soon under her arm. Question after question was answered very patiently by his mother, in the hope of giving his angry feelings time to subside. She gave him a large apple, and allowed him to put it down to roast before the parlor fire. This was a new privilege, and for a while he watched it with apparent interest. But it takes time for the roasting of pippins, and Willie's thoughts went back to the kitchen. 'What a nice drive I might have, while it is

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roasting,' thought he. 'And I have just got a new, long pair of reins, and all. But Sarah *won't*. I wonder if Becky has not come down yet.'

He had opened the door, to run out and see, when his mother called him to put on his boots, his mittens, and his tippet.

'Will it not do after dinner, mother? I shall want to go out and slide, then, but now I want to ride.'

'I wish to send this basket to Mrs. Rowe. She has three sick children, you know.'

'But—'

'They will have to wait for the apples to roast, you know, after you get there.'

'I'll go right over, then. It will not take a minute.'

'You need not hurry home; you may play with Johnny a while.'

'I don't want to. He has skates and I have only a sled. And he has a great high-runnered sled, too, as swift again as mine.'

'Does he make it disagreeable for you to play with him? I thought he was very kind to you. I shall not think so well of him if he is tyrannical.'

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'What is *tyrannical?*'

'I will tell you, when you come back. And I will tend your apple, while you are gone, and cool it when it is done.'

'Thank you, mother, but it will not be done, I know, in five minutes.'

But Willie's five minutes proved to be two hours.

GENEROSITY.

DINNER was smoking on the table when Willie returned. He did not burst into the room, all in a glow, with a loud voice, and red cheeks, bearing witness to the effect of exercise in the open air. He came in very happy, nevertheless, with a look of calm satisfaction, and a quiet smile, and a voice rather below its usual tone, as if he were afraid of disturbing some one. Dinner was soon over, and after the table was cleared, Mr. Rogers called Willie to him, as he sat in his great chair by the fire, and asked him the same question which confused him so much after his quarrel with Becky.

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'Been a good boy to-day, have you not?'

'Oh yes, papa—'

Willie's mother looked round rather hastily, but she saw that his dispute with Sarah, and all his naughty feelings connected with it, were far from his thoughts.

'I have had a nice time in at Mrs. Rowe's. She has no one to help her, and she said if I would stay and amuse the children, while she washed, it would help her very much. They have all been sick, you know.'

'I am glad you could be so useful.'

'So I put down three apples to roast—mamma sent them some of those great ones—oh! mother, is my apple done?'

'Yes; but you do not want it directly after your dinner, I presume.'

'Besides, I suppose you ate some of the three great apples of which you superintended the cooking.'

'Oh fie, father!'

'Ah? why did you not?'

'You would not have me, who have such things in plenty at home, eat up the apples I carried in for them! They are poor, father, and sick. I hope I am not so selfish as that!

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I did not taste a bit, though I put the spoon to my lip, to see if it was too hot for little Lucy, and it smelt very good.'

Willie felt his father press him tighter to his bosom as he said this, and he felt a happy glow in his little heart.

'Oh, father,' he said, after a pause in which he had been watching the blaze of the cheerful wood fire, 'I believe Mrs. Rowe has hardly any wood. Can you give her some?'

'Did she desire you to ask me?'

'Oh, no. But then she said I must not put on more than one stick at a time. She said she could not wash in the room with the children, because the steam would make them take cold. She was sorry, because she thought her wood would not last long, and she had no money to get any more. She has not been able to earn any lately.'

'Perhaps I will let you carry a note down to the wood-market. I will see Mrs. Rowe, first.'

'Will you go now, father, so that she can venture to put more than one stick on at once? I should like to think that they have a good fire this afternoon. It was very chilly, there, though we all sat upon the very hearth.'

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'I have but a few minutes of leisure, and I am exceedingly comfortable before this good fire, with my little boy in my arms. Cannot you excuse me, Willie?'

'Oh! you are in fun.'

'You think I ought to go?'

'Why, papa—*you* know best.'

'Speak out what you think, my boy. Say, papa, I am surprised you should *enjoy* those comforts from which others are debarred by your indolence and procrastination.'

'O! I never thought all those long words,' said Willie, laughing. 'But I think you might go.'

'So do I, my dear boy; and I shall go immediately, and will meet you at my counting-room in half an hour.'

Willie's hands ached so that he could hardly help crying, when he returned from his expedition. His mother took him into her lap, and held them in her warm hands, holding them up high so that the blood, which seemed ready to burst from the ends of his fingers, might run down. As soon as he began to feel at all comfortable, she said, 'Do you remember how little Sarah cried to see you in so much pain the

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last time these poor little fingers got so nipped?'

'Yes, mother. I don't believe she would cry, now.'

'Why not? Is she grown less tender-hearted in a week's time?'

Willie was silent. He felt that Sarah did not love him as she had been disposed to do at first. He did not like to ask himself why, so he turned his thoughts to a more agreeable topic. 'Mrs. Rowe has got her wood, and Irish Sam is to saw and split it for her. O, and I have something beautiful to tell you about it. When the truckman carried it, she desired him to pitch off half of it at the door of her next neighbor. He said my father did not order any to Robinson's. She said she knew it, and meant to give half of hers to Mrs. Robinson, who suffered more than she did. "Why, her husband is a good carpenter, and is able to work," said the truckman. "But he is intemperate, and so they suffer, and people do not pity them," said Mrs. Rowe.'

'You might well say you had something *beautiful* to tell me. Did your father know it?'

'Yes—the man came to ask if he had done

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right, and father said, "Yes; let her have the comfort of her generosity." But he says he will send her some more when it is necessary. I asked him, and he promised me he would.'

'You love to be generous, Willie, do you not?'

'I wish I were a man! You should soon see.'

'Have you no way to be generous now?'

'Not much—have I? Yes—there is my great apple in the closet. If you will cut it exactly in halves, I will share it with Sarah, as Mrs. Rowe shared her wood with Mrs. Robinson.'

'Very good. You know she might have given her merely an armful.'

'And I generally give Sarah only a bite of my apple, if she does not have one too. Becky scolds her for *haunting* me, if I give her more.'

'Becky means well, but you must not let her teach you to be selfish. There are things more valuable than eatables, which I think it would be but just, not to say generous, for you to share with Sarah.'

'What can they be?'

'What you most value yourself.'

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'I don't know what you mean.'

'Perhaps you will think. If you cannot, I will tell you to-night, when you go to bed.'

'Now for my apple, then. Here goes! See! There is some ashes on this half, so it shall be mine. She shall have my favorite spoon, and I will take a larger one.'

'Right.'

Willie found Sarah just where he left her, playing at her window seat. She looked over her shoulder, not much pleased to see him coming to interrupt her. But the apple was very welcome, and eating it from the same plate, put them on a pleasant footing of companionship at once.

'Have you been playing here ever since I left you?'

'No, indeed. I have helped to set the table, and I put away some of the dishes and the knives after Becky washed them, and I picked up some chips for Becky, and she said I was a good little girl.'

Willie also told his morning adventures, particularly the apple-roasting, and the difficulty of doing it by a poor fire. Sarah looked very sober at this.

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'I used to be cold, too, before I came here,' said she, sighing. 'We never had such fires as Becky makes.'

'Poor little girl.'

'But I want to go home again sometimes.'

'What! Now that you have been here a whole fortnight?'

'Because I am afraid when Becky scolds at me.'

'She shan't! I won't let her.' Willie forgot, in his indignation at Becky's unkindness to the friendless, that all the scolding had been on his own behalf.

By this time they had despatched the apple, and Sarah, anxious to show herself grateful for the kindness of Willie's manner, proposed to ride in his omnibus, if he wished it. He was quite moved by it.

'No, dear little Sarah. You do not like to ride, and I will play in your playhouse with you, if you will let me.'

Sarah was enchanted. Not a shadow of distrust came over her happy little face, as he drew a cricket beside hers, and began to arrange the paper dolls. It had never occurred to her to give them names. Willie proceeded

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to do this. Some of them happening to be cut out of the leaves of an old book had names in print on them.

'See! here is one who has a name on his back. Read the letters.'

'G-r-o-t-i-u-s.'

'Grotius.'

'Grocis. What a funny name!'

'This is Anastasius.'

'I can't say that.'

'Yes, you can. I mean, I would try, if I were you. An-as-ta-sius.'

'An—'

'Anastasius.'

'Anna—'

'—stasius.'

'Stages.'

'That will do. This has not a name any where, except a great S on his foot. So this shall be Irish Sam.'

'Yes, Irish Sam.'

'And this shall be Mr. Rogers.'

'Oh yes!'

'And shall this be Becky?'

'No.'

'Then we will call it Mrs. Rowe.'

'No. Mrs. Rogers!'

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'No! I can't have such an ugly one called Mrs. Rogers!'

'Yes—it *is* Mrs. Rogers.'

'I won't have———O, yes, I mean. Only it is dreadful ugly!'

'I think it is a pretty one.'

'Well. I don't care about it. Now I will get the scissors, and cut out some benches.'

Becky was too busy to meddle, and the two children played with the utmost harmony for an hour, in which time Grotius became a thief, was tried before Irish Sam, and condemned upon the testimony of Anastasius. Mr. Rogers superintended the hanging, and Mrs. Rogers went to the funeral.

Having brought matters to this satisfactory end, they ran into the entry to stretch their cramped limbs in playing horse. Willie, of his own accord, took the bridle in his mouth, and was so delighted with his own capers and flings, and the mirth they excited in his companion, that he was sorry when supper-time came to interrupt the sport. Little Sarah put up her lips to kiss him, as she bade him good night. A kiss being exchanged very affectionately, away she ran to her bread and milk in the kitchen, and Willie to his tea and toast in the parlor.

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GOING TO BED.

'You forgot to ask me the meaning of *tyrannical*, I suppose?'

Willie, who was walking up stairs before his mother as she said this, faced about and stopped so suddenly that she almost stepped on him.

'Why you have nearly thrown me down, my child. You do not intend going down stairs again, I presume,' said she, laughing.

'O! I am as bad as Puss—she always gets under my feet, just so! I felt as if I must stop going to bed, because I had forgotten something I was interested about.'

'Then you have been thinking about it?'

'Yes, mother; and I think'—

'Well—don't stop again, or I shall have to walk over you to get along.'

Willie laughed, and ran as fast as he could to the door of his little chamber. It opened into his mother's, and as she was in her room, looking for something in a basket of pieces, he continued to talk all the while he was undressing.

'I am so glad you are up here, mother, for

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I have a great deal to say, and sometimes you forget to come for my light till I am fast asleep.'

'Not very often.'

'Why, yes—don't you remember,' cried Willie, running in with one bare foot, 'Sunday night, when Mr.—— was here, and—'

'Scamper, scamper!' cried Mrs. Rogers, driving him back into his own room again. 'If you do not make haste, I shall be ready to go down before you are in bed.'

'O, don't go! I shall be in in two seconds, mamma. About being tyrannical—I guess I can tell you what it means.'

'Then let your tongue and hands keep time, and you will undress quickly enough!'

'You asked me if Johnny was tyrannical. I did not know at first what you meant, and so I left you to think he was. But, I am sure—.' Here Willie's zeal to free his friend from an imputation which he did not deserve, brought him into the room again with his nightgown on, and his nightcap in his hand. His mother, clapping her hands together, pursued him out again. He went galloping on his hands and feet, and squealing like no animal in particular that ever lived upon the earth.

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When he had at last leaped into his bed, his mother tucked him comfortably in, and then sat down upon his bedside to hear what he was so eager to pour into her ear.

'Please to draw a blanket over you, dear mother, that I may not think you are shivering all the while,'—he began.

Was this a selfish little boy? Was this *Becky's* Willie? The very same.

'When I first began to play with Johnny, mother, I did not like him at all. He would not let me do anything I wanted to, and was always sneering at *little* boys' plays. I did as he told me to, though, almost always. I think he was tyrannical, then.'

'Yes—perhaps he was. I think it very likely. He was not used to playing with a younger playmate, probably.'

'But now, he is very kind. He lets me use his knife, and he helps me whittle, and shows me how to make things. He lends me his high sled, when he does not want it. And when some of the schoolboys snowballed me yesterday, he told them they ought to be ashamed, and he came and stood between me and them, and pelted them off with snowballs.

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I made some of them for him; they were very soft, and not very round, but he did not laugh at them. He said they did very well.'

'Hard snowballs are dangerous. I am glad you cannot make them.'

'I will not, then, when I am a great boy. Mother, Johnny likes to have me with him now a great deal better than he used to. He never seems happier than when he has a parcel of little boys around him, instead of saying that they are always in the way.'

'I do not think there would be any great scandal in saying that,' said Mrs. Rogers, laughing. 'Do you?'

'I don't know. Johnny is a real good hand to play with the older boys, too. At base, they cannot hit him with the ball any more than if he were made of air. Sometimes he catches up his feet, and lets it pass under him, sometimes he leans one way, and sometimes another, or bows his head; any how, he always dodges it.'

'But why were you so averse to a visit to Johnny, this morning, since you love him so well?'

'I don't know, exactly—I wanted to play omnibus.'

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'Try and remember, exactly. I wish to know.'

'I wanted Sarah to be my passenger. I was angry with her about it. So I did not feel right to play with Johnny.'

You had a naughty feeling of pride in your bosom, and it humbled you to think of playing with your superior. It made you feel that though older than Sarah, you are still but a little boy.'

'Was that it, mother! I did not know it.'

'And you have been domineering—'

'*Domineering?*'

'Tyrannizing, then—treating Sarah as Johnny used to treat you—sneering at her—making her do as you say—having your own way—taking advantage of her weakness and gentleness—'

'Oh! mother,' cried Willie, with his face as red as fire, and his eyes full of tears, 'I did not do so this afternoon. I did just as Sarah wanted me to.'

'And you were happier than usual. I have not been so blind as I appeared to be, all this time. I can read in my Willie's eyes when good and generous feelings are uppermost in his heart. I have been both pained and pleased to-day.'

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'Dearest mother, I wish I never gave you pain. I wish I always knew how to be a good boy—I am afraid I never shall—I will try—indeed I will, mother, I hate to be tyrannical. I am afraid I shall be again, if I play in the kitchen.'

'Do not be discouraged, my dear boy; I am not discouraged about you. I knew as soon as you became accustomed to having a companion, you would learn how to treat her. I expected that having had no one hitherto to cross your path, at least at home, you would not be very accommodating at first. I say, I expected it. But I relied on what will never fail me, I hope, your good heart, to set you right when you opened your eyes to the selfishness of your conduct. May I depend on you?'

'Mother, Sarah shall always have her choice in all our plays—'

'No; let her have her just share, a fair half, of all the privileges you like yourself. That is enough, and it is better for her, than that you should yield more. She must not learn selfishness by having her own way always, you know.'

'*She* never could be selfish. She is a real good, little pleasant girl, mother. And I wish

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Becky would not live here; Sarah would be as happy as the birds.'

'Becky is not wanting in solid kindness, and if she is a little rough, why, Sarah must learn to bear it. She will soon get used to it, as you did, and learn to understand Becky's humor. Becky will be a good friend for Sarah as she grows up.'

'So will I. I feel a great deal happpier only to think of what I will do for her. She shall be as happy with me as I am with Johnny. Mother, may I spend some of my money to-morrow?'

'Not for anything to eat, even to share with Sarah.'

'No—I am too big a boy to buy candy.'

'Well, to-morrow will be soon enough to see about it. Now kiss, and bid me good-night, my sweet boy, and in your prayers ask strength to keep your good resolutions.'

SPENDING POCKET-MONEY.

'PRAY, Mr. ——, how much do you ask for that little stove in the window?'

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'That stove? O that is for a little girl's play-house; *you* do not want it, I know.'

'Yes I do; what will you sell it for?'

'Let me show you this top—these nine-pins—this game of the Bell and Hammer—'

'O, that *is* pretty. I wonder if Sarah would not like that just as well. What a cunning little hammer! And a beautiful white horse. Can girls play the game as well as boys?'

'O yes—girls and boys; and ladies, too, play it, and gentlemen.'

'I suppose, then, it is hard to learn.'

'Oh—very simple.'

'I should like to have it,' thought Willie. 'Mamma would play with us, perhaps. Indeed I know she would, for she plays Family Coach when I have company, and even Blind Man's Buff. I doubt, though, if Sarah could learn the game. But then she might have the hammer to put in her playhouse.'

Willie stood a long time, balancing, looking now at the cards, and now at the stove. He would have bought both, but the toyman, as toymen are apt to do, regulated his prices by the sagacity of the buyer, and asked so much

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for each of the coveted articles, that Willie could have but one.

A lady came in, leading a little girl by the hand. 'O! sister! Look at this cunning little stove!' cried the child.

'How much is it?' inquired the lady.

Willie was surprised to hear a much lower price assigned than had been mentioned before. The lady inquired the prices of various articles, and he found that he could have, besides the stove, with its shovel and tongs, a set of chairs, with a table and sofa of a size to match, for less than he had expected to give for the cards. What a genuine playhouse Sarah might have, with all these things, and pleased she would be even to see them!

He cast one longing, lingering look at the hammer and white horse, which lay temptingly uppermost, and then bravely counted out the cash for the playhouse furniture.

'You have not seen this nice box of counters, which belong to the game. Just look! Pink, and blue—'

'I should like them. But I will take these.' So the cards, the hammer, and the counters were put back into the box, and though the man

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was a long time about it, as if to give him time to change his mind, Willie's resolution did not falter.

'I have a little money left,' thought he, as he left the door of the shop. 'I dare say I shall soon have enough to make up the sum for the cards. At any rate, New Year's day is coming, and then I can surely buy them. But if I never have them, I shall not regret buying these things for Sarah. I shall have great pleasure in giving them to her. I will not even call them half mine, nor interfere with them at all.'

As he passed the baker's shop, he saw a boy of his own age crying at the door.

'What is the matter, James Robinson?' he said, in a kind tone.

'I have lost a five cent piece down behind this step, and the baker will not let me have any bread. I have had no breakfast, and mother has not a cent more.'

'Come, go home with me, and Becky will let you have a loaf of her bread, I know.'

'No—I can't do that. Father swore he would kill me if I went begging. Father has not been home these three days. We don't know where he is. Mother says, perhaps he

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is frozen to death somewhere. I have been to the tavern, and everywhere. I wish he never would come back. But poor mother cries all the time for fear he has died away alone somewhere.'

While James was saying this, Willie had laid down his budget upon the step, and taken off his mittens, and unbuttoned his great coat. At last he arrived at the pocket where his purse was deposited. 'Here, James,' he said, as he emptied it into his hand, 'you need not be afraid to take it, for it is my own, and mother would be willing.'

'O, thank you—thank you. But I ought not to rob you of all—'

'You are very welcome. I had rather you should have it than not.'

Willie spoke the truth. The pleasure of relieving actual distress put the cards entirely out of his mind. And if he thought of them again at all, it was to rejoice that he had not been tempted by them, when he saw the delight of little Sarah when he placed the toys upon her window-seat, and told her they were her own. He stood by, without touching a finger, although she arranged them, as he thought, most absurdly.

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Many a pleasant hour did Willie and Sarah pass at the window-seat, after this; and many a time did Sarah help most cheerfully to tackle all the kitchen chairs together for an omnibus, or a train of cars, and take long journeys in them without a word of complaint. Becky soon learned Willie's new principle of equal rights, and all disputes were settled by it. In doubtful cases, Mrs. Rogers was called in to decide. Children love justice; they only need to have a fair view of it, to approve it warmly.

SCHOOL TRIALS.

WILLIE's temper had become proof against any common provocation, even from one weaker and less wise than himself; and a dear little fellow he was, and dearly loved by all his friends, when his eighth birthday arrived. This period he had looked forward to with much impatience, for on this day he was to begin to go to school. He ran about in a delightful bustle of preparation, getting his satchel furnished with pens, pencils, inkstand, and slate. Little Sarah flut-

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tered about with him, glad because he was glad, without reflecting that she was now to lose the playmate to whom she had become much attached. Everything was ready long before it was time to go. Never had the hands of the clock seemed to move so slowly.

'Mother,' said Willie, after he had watched it in silence for a while, 'I am afraid something is the matter with the clock. Will you see what the time is by your watch?'

The clock and the watch were perfectly agreed that it lacked an hour of school-time. Willie felt as if they had conspired together to make him tardy.

'Mother—I am sadly afraid I shall be late. Something may happen to detain me on the way. May I not set out now?'

'Oh no—it cannot take an hour to go half a mile! If you go now, you will get very cold before the school-room is open.'

'But I am afraid I shall not be there in season. And I am afraid of a great many things. I do not know how I shall behave. I am sure I shall do something awkward, or perhaps wrong, because I am not used to being in school. I begin not to want to go.'

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'You *must* begin some time or other, you know.'

'Yes. But many of the scholars of my age, —I dare say, *all* of them,—have been to school always, and know a great deal more than I,—grammar, geography, and every thing!'

'You have only to do what is required of you, in the best manner you can. You need not compare yourself with others.'

'I shall be laughed at.'

'Possibly.'

'Well, it will not break any bones, as Becky says. But I wish I had always been to school. Don't you wish so too, mother?'

'You are not able to understand all my reasons for not sending you hitherto, but I am very far from regretting it. I am not at all anxious. I have no doubt you will do very well.'

'But I wish I knew grammar.'

'I think you speak more correctly than most children.'

'I mean—'

'I have taught you some things about grammar without your being aware of it. You are not going to study English grammar, even now.'

'Not if Mr. Benton wishes it?'

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'As to that, you are to do every thing he tells you to do. You are his boy while you are in the school-room. If he tells you to walk on your head, you ought to try to do it.'

Willie laughed at this, and remembered it long, from the whimsical way in which his mother expressed it.

'And you must tell him the truth, as you would to me; the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'

'Certainly, mother. Did you fear I should not?'

'No, my dear Willie, but it may not be always easy. So be on your guard lest you should shrink from your duty.'

'I 'll not shrink, mother; not I! I shall think of you. Now you have made me feel again like going to school. There! It is nearly time now. Good-bye, Mother! Good-bye Sarah.'

'Good-bye; be a good boy.'

Willie felt quite humble when he found himself in school, among fifty boys, all his superiors, at least in age. There were some boys of eight years old, but not an urchin in the whole, including the idlers and dunces, who did not at first look down on him. The master, who had

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his hands full before he came, took very little notice of the new comer for two or three days. He merely put him into a class which was to begin the Latin grammar, and employed him in ciphering upon his slate.

Some of the boys,—there are such in every school,—were more given to roguery than study. Tired of plaguing each other, they were glad of a new subject for teazing. Willie's good temper was now very valuable to him. To all the little annoyances he met with, he opposed a never-failing fund of good humor.

School-tricks of various sorts were played off upon him. He bore it all so pleasantly, that there was very little fun in tormenting him. There was but one point on which he was sensitive—his ignorance. He was easily mortified, and occasionally a little out of temper, when reminded in a sneering manner that he was such an ignoramus as never to have studied either grammar, or geography, nor ciphered on a slate, or on a black-board.

It was not long, however, before be began to suspect that they were not so very much wiser than himself.

A few of the younger boys were picking their

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heels, perched on top of the fence, watching a game of base from which they were excluded by want of length of limb. Willie, not knowing what else to do with himself, climbed up, and began kicking his heels against the fence also.

'Hurrah! Here's Bill Rogers, says he never learned joggrephy,' cries one.

'I have read some—I have Parley's United States, and a little geography in my library at home.'

'O, those are for little children, I suppose,' shouts another, with an insulting laugh.

'I 'll bet you don't know where Michilimackinack is,' bawls Tom.

'Nor you, 'nother,' returns Jim, which produced a burst of mirth, in which Willie joined with a very good relish.

'I say I do! It 's on Lake Erie, I believe, or somewhere along there.'

'O—'t a'nt *no*where's along there.'

'No'—'No'—'No'—cried all the boys, but Willie.

'Well, I suppose it is in the Gulf of Mexico, then.'

'*In* the Gulf of Mexico? I do not know

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where it is, but I read to my mother about it once; they call it Mackinaw, and a missionary lives there. I suppose he cannot live in the Gulf of Mexico.'

'On an Island, you fool,' cried Tom.

'Perhaps it was,' said Willie, humbly, and coloring to the ears.

'Have you ever writ any *cumpersition?*' asked Tim.

'I can write letters,' said Willie.

'O! that ai'nt composition,' cried Tom.

'Why, I believe it is, but it's the easiest kind,' said Tim, with an air of superiority. 'I'm going to write travels next week. That's real hard.'

'*You* write travels!'

'Yes, travels. You could'nt do it, 'cause you don't know joggrephy enough. But you'll see. I'll read you mine. I'm going a journey to England.'

'A journey? Do you not mean a voyage?'

'I'm going round by land.'

At this Willie laughed so immoderately that he fell off from the fence, and rolled on the grass.

'Why, just as if they would have steamships, if you could go by land,' observed Tom.

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'Oh—it is a great way round by the north pole, somewheres. So you need not laugh, Bill; you don't know nothing about the poles.'

'I know England is an island,' said Willie, sitting up, and composing himself. 'I have played with my travelling map often enough, I hope, to know that, at least.'

'Well. Suppose 't is an island, it does not hinder my having a bridge.'

'Over the Atlantic ocean! O! I shall die of laughing!'

From such conversations as these, Willie learned to feel himself less behind-hand than he had supposed. What ideas he had, were just ones. He had never learned by rote what he did not understand. What he knew, he knew certainly and distinctly. To Thomas and James, the maps were a confused mass of boundaries and names, which they had studied piecemeal so long, without one connected view, that they had no distinct idea of distance or relative size. To them, Massachusetts was no larger than the school-room playground; Boston, a great deal larger; and the town in which they lived, larger still. If they rode a few miles from home, they were astonished to find the world so large, and

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wondered how much farther it was possible to go.

'Why, what do you *mean* by carrying one?' said Willie to James, who had been deputed to show him how to do a sum in addition.

James had no answer to give, except that everybody did so, and he must. *Why* the left hand figure must be carried to the next column, and added to it, Jemmy could not tell for his life. He had never thought of inquiring. He only laughed at Willie because he had arrived at such an advanced age without the knowledge of so simple a fact in numbers. Willie had some quickness in doing sums in his head. His father had often amused himself with teaching him, and had made him very fond of it. In the most difficult questions he had ever had, he had been able always to see *why* the answer must be right, but now he was discouraged. This *carrying* was very mysterious. After doing a few sums under James's direction, he applied to his master, having watched for a time when he was disengaged. The master smiled, and explained it to him, and Willie wondered he had not himself seen the reason for it, in the previous lessons in writing down numbers.

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'Jem'—he whispered when he returned to his seat. 'Jem! Look on my slate a minute. I can tell you why we carry the tens to the next column.'

'Carry ten? Carry one, you mean, or two, or so—'

'Carry one, if there is one ten, as for instance in twelve.'

'Poh! Just as if I don't know you set down the two, and carry the one.'

'That *one* is ten.'

'I say it is'nt—'

'It is.'

'It is not. Let's see you carry ten, and make your sum come right.'

There was no persuading James to reason upon the matter, so Willie gave it up. But his dread of James's ridicule was very much lessened, and with it, the danger of being put out of temper by him.

In a week he was quite at home in school, and very happy. Having a good memory, and a power of attention which had not been jaded by the daily tasks of years, he soon distinguished himself in the Latin class. Mr. Benton often smiled at the eagerness with which he watched

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for his turn to recite, and his manifest delight in the noble sounds of Latin words, as the declensions rolled rapidly from his tongue.

BECKY'S TEMPER FIT.

'MOTHER, I don't get mad at school now, at all,' said Willie, one day. 'I think it is as easy to be a good boy at school, as at home. I get my lessons better than any boy in the class, and I mind the rules, and the master likes me very well.'

'How do you know that? Perhaps your vanity deceives you.'

Willie laughed, and colored. 'I only wanted you to know it, and there was no one else to tell you, so I said it. But I really think he does, mother. And Tom says he is partial to me.'

'Poh—nonsense—I hope he would punish your faults, as well as smile at your endeavors to please him. You will come home with a red palm some day yet.'

'Never, mother! I 'll never be feruled!'

'Do not be too sure.'

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'I should not think you would let your boy be so disgraced!'

'I put you into Mr. Benton's hands, and you must take your chance with the rest.'

'I'll run right out of school.'

'Then your father will advise you to run right in again.'

'He shall not strike me, for I will not deserve it.'

'Ah—there you put it on the right ground. It *is* a disgrace to be feruled, but the disgrace is in having deserved it.'

'But you do not approve of whipping. You never gave me a blow that I remember. And you never allow me to strike.'

'True. But my ideas are not the guide of Mr. Benton's actions. He is a good man, I trust, and does what he thinks is for the best. You must submit yourself to him.'

'He whips Tom.'

'How does Tom behave?'

'He bawls out at the least touch. I am sure I should not! He is sullen all day after it, and makes up faces, when the master is not looking.'

'Do you like to see such marks of ill temper?'

'It makes me and all the boys laugh.'

'You do wrong to laugh.'

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'Then I am sorry, mother, I did not think.'

'Do you suppose he would make faces if no one looked at him?'

'No, indeed.'

'Or be sullen and ill-humored if no one but the master took notice of it?'

'I do not know.'

'If there were no Willies to look on with wondering eyes to see him brave his teacher's displeasure, would he do it?'

'Why, mother—I did not encourage him in it. Did I?'

'Yes; you did. And you assented—you were pleased and proud, when he said the master was *partial* to you, and of course *unjust* to him.'

'So I did. I did not think.'

'Now after all your boasting how easy a matter you find it to be a good boy in school, I have convinced you of doing very wrong. Is it not so, my candid Willie?'

'Yes'—said Willie, sighing. 'But I did not mean so. I am very sure, if Tom would do as I do, the master would love him just as well as me. I will tell Tom so, and see if I can make him a good boy. I will tell him so kindly, and not make him angry. O how glad I shall

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be, if I can make him try to do right. I wish I were with him now. And the next time, I will not even smile ever so little, nor turn my head that way, if he makes faces, or twitches his elbows, or hunches his shoulders. If I get a whipping ever, I will try to bear it well. Ah, mother, how little I thought I had done anything wrong to-day. But I will try to-morrow, and perhaps I shall make Tom better. Now, mother, will you forgive me?' he said, throwing his arms round her neck, and leaning his head on her shoulder. His mother kissed him, and pressed him to her side, with a swelling of the heart which filled her eyes with tears.

'It is not your mother, but your conscience, the voice in your heart, that you are to make peace with. You expressed a noble wish just now, that of helping others to be good by your influence. Even a little boy can do a great deal.'

'I know one boy who uses bad language. I told him to-day I should not play with him if he did, and he said he would try not to. And as soon as he said a wicked word, I went right away, though I wanted to finish the play.'

'That was right. Now you have done some good to-day, I hope.'

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Little Sarah came running in with the news that James Robinson had brought Willie some snapping corn to parch. They ran races to the kitchen, puss galloping at their side, and there sat James, looking bright and happy, and warmly clothed.

'Father's come home. He's come home sober. He's signed the pledge, and is a Washingtonian. He works every day. He is kind! Oh, you can't tell how happy we all are!' cried James, starting up, and running to meet Willie. 'See, I have got some grand warm mittens, and a comforter, and all. Father's going to pay Mrs. Rowe for the wood, and thank her too.'

Becky's leave being gained, they all three sat down at the fire, to parch the corn. Never was corn so waggishly inclined. One alighted in the curls of James's hair. Another took aim at one of Willie's dimples. One popped into the dish-kettle, and went sailing over its boiling billows, like a Nautilus; another jumped into a bed of coals, and burnt itself up in an instant. Pop! pop! pop! Out they hopped in all directions, till puss scampered away, shaking her ears, and her feet, and Sarah put her apron over her head as a shield.

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Becky laughed heartily with the rest. 'You don't know how to parch corn,' she said. 'I'll lend you the spider, which has a cover to it; I'll butter the bottom of it, and strew in some salt.'

'But it will not be half so good fun Becky,' said Willie. 'Hollo! That one went up the chimney, I verily believe.'

'Are there any more in?' asked James, stooping over the ashes. Bang! He was hit like Goliath upon the middle of his forehead. He gave a great shout, rolled heels over head, and stretched himself out for dead. Willie and Sarah laughed till they had no strength to laugh any longer.

Just as James was picking himself up, with a very droll face, which set them laughing and jumping again, over went a pitcher, which was sitting in the corner, and their frolic came to an untimely end. Becky rushed forward in a storm of passion, caught up Sarah, and set her down hard in a chair; caught James by the arm, whirled him out of her way, and slammed the crickets across the kitchen. Puss took refuge in the closet, whence she was forthwith driven, and only escaped a broken back by the blow

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which was aimed at her with the tongs, falling on the pitcher, the harmless cause of the tempest.

The smash brought Becky to herself a little, and her wrath found vent in words, 'There's all my muffins! You deserve never to have another mouthful to eat as long as you live! I'll have no beggar's brats in my kitchen again, turning somersets on my hearth,—kicking over my muffins on purpose to make me mad—'

James caught up his mittens and comforter, and went off in high dudgeon.

Willie stood by, sorrowful, but not afraid.

'I believe it was I who overturned the pitcher. I did not mean to do it,' he said. 'I rather think I must have struck my foot against the shovel.'

'The shovel had no business out of its place. Shovel! I'll shovel ye all out of the kitchen, if ever you parch another kernel of corn here.'

'Well, I will not, Becky. We are very sorry.'

'You'll have no muffins for your breakfast; that's my comfort.'

'No. Quite a loss, too. Mother often says nobody makes such good muffins as yours.'

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'Need not think to come round me, with your flattering speeches.'

'I do not want to come round you, only to make you feel more happy, Becky.'

'Happy!' said Becky, with a glance at the muffins, and the ruins of the pitcher.

'*Pleasant*, then, for I do not think you ought to be in a passion about an accident; do you?'

'Is it for you to tell me so, jackanapes?'

'Yes, Becky. Mother told me not to be afraid to tell people when I thought they did wrong, because it might be the means of doing them some good. Are you angry with me for it? I hope not.'

'I am rather hasty, to be sure. But then I don't expect to be preached to by a child. You're right, though, Willie; I can't say but what you are. So now I'll wash up, and try to forget it. It's too bad, though, I declare.'

'Can I help you, Becky?' said Sarah, in her softest tone.

Becky deigned no answer, and the little girl did not dare quit her chair. Willie went and sat down by her, and held her hand in his, as they both watched in silence the washing up of the hearth. Becky still looked cross, and

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perhaps she would have vented her uncomfortable feelings in words, but as she looked upon Willie's honest face, with the clear, bright eyes turned upon her, she felt ashamed to scold any more. She felt a respect for the child, and when she reflected how much effort he had made in times past, to control his own temper, she felt humbled before him.

The two children sat perfectly still and silent a long while, as Becky moved sullenly round the kitchen, gathering up the fragments of the pitcher, and the scattered corn, collecting the crickets, and restoring things to their usual order. Puss put her head out from behind the closet door, and after a long gaze upon Becky, and the scene of the late tornado, crawled forth, and jumped up into Willie's lap. Her purring seemed to make the stillness of the room more striking.

'Poor things!' thought Becky to herself. 'They were having a *beautiful* time, but now they have no heart to play. There they sit, as still as mice. I have frightened them half to death. And I'm sure I don't care so terrible much about them muffins. 'Tain't as if I hadn't got bread enough for breakfast.'

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These thoughts passed through Becky's mind, but her countenance did not clear up. She had not yet got the victory over herself. Passionate people often have a false shame about *coming round*, as if they felt it a disgrace to be sorry.

After a short struggle with this foolish pride, she said to Sarah, 'If you want the bottom of this pitcher, you can carry it out to Irish Sam, and get him to grind it smooth. It will make a *complete* milk-pan for your baby-house.'

Down jumped the children at once, so full of joy and gratitude, that Becky could not help smiling, though with a quivering lip. 'I'll wash it for you; you would be sure to cut your fingers,' she said, in quite a pleasant tone.

'O, you are kind, very kind, Becky,' cried both the children, overjoyed that the sunshine of good humor and kindness was restored.

Irish Sam performed his part, Willie turning the grindstone, and when Becky strained the milk, she left a little in the pail for Sarah to strain into her little pan. It was set on the table in the playhouse for the cream to rise, and Sarah expected to skim it with much delight. But unfortunately for her first essay in the dairy line, there came a thief in the night, and not a

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drop was left in the pan. It appeared as if it had been washed clean, and they fancied Pussy's little red tongue had been the dish-cloth.

A RECONCILIATION.

'Well, Miss Rogers, I've made up my mind that your boy is to be a minister,' said Becky, that evening, when Mrs. Rogers, as was her custom, went into the kitchen to talk over household arrangements for the next day.

'I wish he may be fit for it,' said she, sitting down by Becky's little table. 'I think it is the noblest way of spending a life.'

'I wish you'd heard him talk to me to-day. I had a pitcher of muffins in the corner. O dear! it's no use saying so now, but I guess they'd 'a' been first rate ones. Well, the children, in their carryings on, upset 'em all over the hearth. I was in a huff, as you'd suppose, and stormed round and broke the pitcher. Well, I will say to my dying day, I never saw such a boy as our Willie. There was Sarah, as white as a sheet, and James Robinson as angry as I was,—but Willie looked up upon me, as pleas-

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ant as ever I see him. "Becky," says he, "Becky, you don't do right to be so mad about an accident."—And they *did* not mean to do it, Mrs. Rogers; I knew that very well. I might 'a' done it myself.'

'We may all of us take lessons from children sometimes,' said Mrs. Rogers. 'I myself have felt reproved to-day, when I heard Willie wishing to help his school-fellows to be good. I am afraid I do not use all the opportunities I have to benefit others, any more than to improve myself.'

'I am sure you've done the duty of a Christian by me, Miss Rogers. I never could live long any where till I come here. I am sure I can't bear to hear you reproaching of yourself.'

'If you wish me to think I have done you any good, Becky, you must let me see that you try to govern your temper.'

'I will, but I never can think of it soon enough, I am so hasty. I am sorry enough when it is over.'

'If you are in earnest, you will keep it in mind. And, Becky, if you are really in earnest, you will pray God to help you, and then I have no doubt you will be able to overcome that or any other fault.'

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Becky made no reply, and Mrs. Rogers said no more at that time.

Spring came, with its pleasant sunny days, bringing the birds from their winter homes, and opening the buds. The violets, with their lovely little companion, the Houstonia, looked up sweetly from the green slopes and banks, as Willie went by to school, and he always remembered to gather a bunch of them on his return for his mother and Sarah. Becky laughed to see them honored with a place on the centre-table, and in the playhouse, and promised Sarah a bunch of tulips and lilacs at Election-time, from the garden of her sister.

This sister was the wife of a shoemaker in the village. Until within a few weeks, Becky had not set foot in her house for years. In their childhood and growing up, they had always been at swords' points. Lydia's temper and Becky's were no more the same, than flint and steel, but whenever they came in contact, the sparks began to fly. Lydia had a cold sneer which made Becky furious; she considered herself vastly good tempered, when she irritated her sister beyond endurance by a contemptuous silence, or a parading display of forgiveness. At

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last their mutual grievances rose to such a pitch, that they *did not speak*. This silent way of keeping up a quarrel might have its advantages, were it not that the parties generally make up for not speaking *to* each other, by giving their tongues the greatest possible liberty in speaking *of* each other.

Things were in this state when Becky heard that her sister's children were dangerously sick. Mrs. Rogers immediately proposed that she should go in and offer her services. Becky stared, and turned very red at the proposition, but pressed her lips together, and remained silent. Mrs. Rogers left her to think of it. An hour or two after, she came and said she could not think it was her duty to go, and leave Mrs. Rogers to do *her* work. This objection was speedily disposed of, by sending Sarah for Mrs. Rowe; and Becky, furnished with a basket of delicacies, with a beating heart, crossed her sister's threshold once more. She found Mr. Griffith, her sister's husband, cooking his own dinner; and having sent up her offering to the sick chamber, she took hold of whatever her hands found to do, with a hearty good will, which soon restored comfort and order in the deserted kitchen.

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Kindness sinks deep when the heart is softened by affliction, and Lydia greeted her sister more affectionately than she had ever done before. They no longer spoke of each other as 'our Bec,' and 'our Lyd'—it was 'sister Becky,' and 'poor Lydia,' and as one was very anxious not to offend, and the other not to take offence, very pleasant to them both was this renewal of sisterly intercourse. Becky staid several days.

'Sister Becky is a great deal pleasanter than she used to be,' said Lydia to her husband.

'Living at Mr. Rogers's has done her a sight of good. Mrs. Rogers is a *beautiful* woman, everybody knows.'

'I 'm sure,' said Becky to Mrs. Rogers, 'to see our Lydia, every one must know that affliction comes for our good. She used to be a selfish creature, but coming so nigh losing them children has opened her heart.'

Both were right. Becky was learning almost unconsciously, to govern her warm impulses by Christian principles, and Lydia's heart had been smitten, like the rock in the desert, and love and gratitude were gushing forth to gladden all around.

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NON-RESISTANCE.

'Coward! Coward! Why don't you pitch into him?' 'Hurra! I'd never take that!' 'Well done, Tom!' 'Run home and tell your mamma!' 'Fie, Bill; you are the strongest! You could drive Tom into the pond!' 'Try it—only try!'

The time had come for a severe trial of Willie's principles. Tom had hectored him all the morning—had thrown his ball into a ditch—had knocked off his cap, and kicked it over a wall—had pushed him down, and soiled his neat dress. Finally, as if determined to put his temper to every possible test, he struck him in the face.

Willie bore it all pretty well. He was angry; he could not help showing it too, which was just what Tom wanted. He had not the advantage which perfect calmness would have given him, but he remembered not to return evil for evil. He could have revenged himself, for Tom was puny, and a coward to boot—and his companions would have admired him. How much more would they have admired his forbearance, had they known its motive! If he

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had had the least sympathy from any one of them, he would have felt superior to the trial; but all joined their voices to insult and ridicule him. The last outrage was too much; he burst into tears, and took refuge in the school-room.

Tom triumphed with a loud, insulting laugh, in which all the boys joined, but very soon master Tom found his own cap flying through the air, and made use of as a football; and in the wild spirit of justice common among boys, he had bitter experience of all the vexations he had made Willie endure, till he went off crying in his turn.

Willie could hardly study that forenoon, his mind was so tempest-tossed. He thought it very hard that he must be singular, and be misunderstood, and perhaps disliked, in consequence of doing what he knew was right. So he resolved at noon to go round by his father's counting-room, and walk home to dinner with him. He thought this was a case in which he would rather consult his father, than his mother.

Mr. Rogers laughed, and said Willie was a hero, when he described the annoyances of the morning, and his endurance of them. Willie thought it curious that his father called him a

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hero for the same course of conduct which had procured him the title of coward.

'You know, father,' he said, 'you have never allowed me to strike, if I am ever so much provoked. I know, too, myself, that revenge is not right. But is it right either, or at all fair, that I should be so imposed upon? What I wanted to ask you, is, now would not you give Tom one good threshing, just to make him be quiet.'

'Would not *I*? Whew! I should be prettily set to work!'

Willie laughed heartily. 'You know I did not mean *you*, father. But I have been thinking I had better do it. Not for revenge—that would be wicked—but for justice. He ought not to act so; I ought not to let him, ought I? I really think it would do him good, not harm. He shall not go on plaguing people, with nothing to hinder him, I can tell him.'

'Is your motive for the threshing a wish to make him a better boy, or to make him afraid to provoke one stronger than himself?'

Willie looked puzzled, and disappointed. 'Must I then let all the boys call me a coward, and tamely submit to be cuffed by all of them?'

'You have not frankly answered my question.'

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'Well, come to think of it, father, I must honestly confess that I believe it was not my motive, but only a reason I had thought of—'

'To justify you in doing it.'

'Yes, sir.'

'I thought so. Suppose we talk of something else for the present, and at some other time discuss the matter coolly. You are justly indignant at Tom—and I do not uphold him in his mean and cowardly abuse of your patience and good temper.'

'I am glad if it was good temper, father. I did not know as it was, for I have felt very cross at him all the forenoon.'

'Ah, well,' said his father, patting his shoulder, 'you were a good boy not to revenge yourself when you were angry. If you can learn *not* to be angry, at all, under such insults, you will be far superior to your father. We will both try, my son, to imitate the example of one, whom, though we never saw him, we both love, —who, when he was reviled, reviled not again.'

'Yes, father. When they buffeted him, and spit upon him, he does not seem as if he was angry at all they could do to him, he was so sorry for them. He said, "Love your enemies," and *he* did. If he had withered their

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arms away when they struck him, it would not have been at all like Christ; would it?'

'No, indeed—and we should not have loved him.'

'No. Have *you* any enemies, father?'

'Not exactly.'

'*How*, not exactly? I should not think you could have any.'

'Oh, I often have to put up with treatment from people I have to deal with, which I do not like at all. My comfort is, and it can be yours, too, that it is better to be the one to suffer an injury, than the one to do it.'

'What do they do, to a great man like you!'

'They do not *strike* me. The law interferes to hinder that, just as Mr. Benton would protect you from Tom, if you appealed to him.'

'Oh, ho! You will not catch me telling the master! But what *do* they do, then?'

'O, they take a mean advantage, often, in business.'

'Cheat!'

'That would not justify me in cheating them in return, would it?'

'Oh, no, indeed!'

'And there are some who call me names—'

'O father! Why! I never heard them!'

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'People call each other names on account of difference of opinion in religion, and politics, and get very angry sometimes.'

'I should not think they would! See! There is Sarah, looking the wrong way to see if I am coming home from school!' And stepping on the grass, he ran softly up behind her, and cried 'Boo!' close in her ear. Such a start, and then such a capering and laughing ensued, that Willie forgot all about his school troubles, and his unanswered question about the punishment of Tom.

HONOR AND DUTY.

WILLIE had not any malice in his disposition —he could not cherish ill will against any one, when his mind had time to cool. He and Tom played together in the afternoon. To be sure, Tom seemed to feel rather awkward, and less ready to be forgiven, than Willie to forgive. Neither of them said a word about the matter however, till the school-bell summoned them from their play.

Tom's desk was at the side of Willie's and James sat behind him.

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'Who laughed aloud?' asked Mr. Benton, in a stern tone.

Willie was the culprit. He had seen Tom repeatedly draw the feather of a pen across the ear of a boy in front of him, who impatiently brushed away the fly, as he thought it, several times, and even gave himself a sound box on the ear to get rid of him.

'Te he!' neighed Willie, tickled beyond control.

'James Doane—Who laughed?'

'I did'nt hear nobody,' said James; and Willie was puzzled to know whether it was a downright lie, expressed in his usual bad grammar, or an evasion. But he scorned to be sheltered from punishment by deception. He rose and stood in his seat.

'What! Was it you, William Rogers?'

'Yes, sir. I could not help it.'

'I am rather disposed to excuse you, because you are usually so careful not to do wrong. But what did you see that was so diverting? Any mischief?'

'I had rather not tell, sir.'

'Tell me immediately, or come and take your feruling.'

Willie hesitated a moment, and took a glance

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at Tom. But he knew by that momentary glimpse of his face, that it was in vain to hope for a confession in that quarter. So he manfully strode down the aisle, and held out his hand. A little soft hand it was, and the claps which fell upon it made it tingle smartly.

There was a general rustle in the benches, and then a perfect silence.

'Are you willing to tell me now?'

'No sir.'

Clap—clap! 'Now?' said the master, holding the ferule ready for another blow.

'Please to excuse me, sir; I think I ought not to tell.'

'How so?'

'It would not be doing as I would be done by, to bring others into trouble.' And he added in his own mind, 'and it would be returning evil for evil, to tell tales of Tom.'

'Well, you may go to your seat. You have mistaken your duty, but you have shown yourself a brave boy in doing it. After school, I will talk the matter over with you.'

There was another general rustle in the benches, as the boys resumed their tasks. Willie's own reflections, as he sat with his head resting on his arms, upon the front of his desk,

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brought him to the conclusion that he had done wrong not to answer when he was questioned. He reflected that the master had a right to his testimony—had a right to know all that was going on in his school-room. He resolved to give the boys, one and all, fair warning that he had changed his mind about it. 'I need not go and inform,' thought he, 'I can at least promise that, and that is all I need engage for.'

The boys all gathered round Willie, as he came out of the school-house, to know what Mr. Benton had said to him.

'I suppose you had a real *jawing*,' said Tom.

'There was no occasion for *jawing*, as you call it, for I told him at once I would tell him the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, whenever he asked me, and if it was about the biggest boy in the school. So now you all know what to look out for. Don't you let me see you doing what you do not want him to know.'

There was a murmur of surprise at this. Some approved, and some growled.

'And I do not want any of you to lie for *me*, said Willie, proudly. 'You may tell the truth of me, and welcome, and I will stand the consequences.'

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'Did you tell him of me?' asked Tom, with some trepidation. 'Did you tell what set you out laughing?'

'No—he did not ask.'

'I would have told,' said one of the big boys, 'to pay Tom for this morning.'

'I could have paid him before, if I had wanted to.'

'Why did'nt you, then?'

'I did not choose to do it.'

'Why not, I should like to know. We all know, if you could stand there, and take it, from the master when you might have got off, you are pretty good stuff. What made you so mighty tame this morning?'

'If Tom had given me such a slap on the chops, I would have made his black and blue, I know,' said James.

'You think two wrong things make one right one, that's your arithmetic, Jim,' said Willie, laughing, and running off.

'If ever you raise your hand to him again, you're a mean fellow, said Jim to Tom, who looked rather sheepish.

'He has paid you,' said George Murray, one of the older boys, '"good for evil."'

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'Come, let us all agree to tell the truth when we are asked,' said another boy, 'I am tired of fighting shy.'

'Yes, I think Billy is right,' said George.

Some agreed to act on the new principle; others began to talk about informers and tale-bearers. On the whole Willie's straight forward honesty pleased them, so far remote from malice, or any disposition to bring his playmates into trouble; and the older boys after this took a great deal more notice of him. He became a general pet, and favorite.

Mr. Benton often stood at the door to watch the boys at their play. Occasionally he would take the bat, and join them in a game of ball, to induce the older boys to exert themselves in some active exercise, after sitting at their desks in school. He was much diverted one day to see little Willie playing *run across* with them. Any other little boy in the school would have been knocked over perhaps a dozen times, or driven out of the limits. But one long-limbed fellow would jump over him if he happened to be in his way; another, finding him in his path, would catch him up, and run with him to the end of the course. George Murray happening to stumble over him, took him on his shoulders,

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and ran to and fro, till in an attempt to dodge the pursuit of the 'old man,' they both fell down together, and were caught. Then they stood, like Goliath and his armor-bearer, in comparative size, two against a host; and now and then a boy would pretend a sprained foot, and hop instead of running, while Willie made his little feet fly in pursuit of him. Once, in running down a slope with a troop of his new friends, Willie tripped over a stone, and another boy fell over him; that tripped up another who was close behind, the others were unable to stop themselves, and down they all tumbled like a row of bricks, and lay in a heap like the slain upon a battle-field.

A FALSE REPROACH.

THERE was a large, uncultivated field, near the play-ground, full of mossy rocks and hillocks, with here and there a cluster of bushes, or gnarly trees. It sloped down to the borders of a little pond, almost the whole surface of which was shaded by one large tree, which, undermined by the water, inclined over it, as if admiring its reflection in the mirror beneath.

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This place was a favorite resort of the school-boys; and quite a fleet of little boats might be seen riding on the pond on any calm and pleasant day. Some were simply shingles, with paper sails, and splinters for masts; others were scooped and shaped out of a solid block of wood, and were equipped in style, with cloth sails, and thread ropes, which a crew of birch bark seemed to be pulling with all their might. But the glory of the mimic navy might be seen riding at anchor in a snug harbor between the roots of the old tree—a tiny frigate, built for a model, by a regular architect, perfect in all its parts, and exact in all its proportions. It belonged to George Murray, who, though he was studying navigation in good earnest to prepare himself to go to sea, did not feel too old to spend many a recess in making it perform voyages to the opposite coast and back again. Willie and the other little boys looked on with almost envious admiration, to see how well it would obey the helm, and sail directly to the point desired, as if its wooden sailors were gifted with intelligence to direct its motions.

On the opposite side of the field beyond the pond, ran a long white wall, with iron spikes upon the top of it, which had a very suspicious

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and guarded look. On the inside of this high wall, various kinds of fruit-trees and vines were trained, and boughs loaded with pears, apples, and peaches, hung temptingly over. The good old gentleman to whom the garden belonged, never forgot to send a basket of the choicest fruit, when ripe, into the school-house for the boys, and this kindness guarded his fruit more effectually than the spikes. Any apple or peach which fell into the field they considered a fair prize; but any boy who should attempt to knock any fruit from the trees, would have been despised by the rest, not only as a thief, but as wanting in gratitude and honor. No boy in the school would have ventured to do it openly, and probably no boy wished to do it.

Willie, surely, would have been the last of all boys to dream of such an act. But one day, when he had brought to the pond a pocket-full of stones to ballast his little vessel, one of the boys accused him of designs upon the fruit in doing it. So unexpected and outrageous an attack took Willie by surprise; he trembled with passion, and stamped, screaming in an unnatural tone of voice, 'You lie—you know you lie!'

'O, I saw you pretending to throw a stone

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at random, and it went wonderfully near that way!' said the boy, tauntingly.

Willie hastily raised his arm to hurl one at *him*, but at the same moment he caught the eye of George Murray, on the opposite shore of the pond; and behind him gazing on him with a sorrowful and surprised look, stood Mr. Benton. The stone dropped from Willie's hand.

'There! You are afraid to heave that rock now the master's looking!' said the boy, thinking to irritate Willie still further.

But that sorrowful look had reached the bottom of Willie's heart, and had quenched the fire that was raging there, in a moment. He felt that he had been in a greater rage than he had ever been in his life, and he was frightened at his own weakness in being thus carried away by passion. 'Had I thrown that stone,' thought he, 'I might have killed my schoolmate! O what horror that would have been! I can imagine him, all pale and senseless. And, then, my mother! What would ever have made her smile again!' These thoughts flashed through his mind, and with them a strong sense of fear, indeed, not of the master, but of himself, and of his own undisciplined temper.

'You *were* aiming at those peaches, I know,'

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pursued the boy, in the same taunting tone.

'You would not have been so mad if it had not been true of you. So you need not lie about it.'

Willie was not to be provoked, now that he had come to himself. He drew a long breath, and looking the boy steadily in the face, he said, as pleasantly as he could, 'I know you are not in earnest. You cannot think so ill of me.'

'He judges others by himself,' cried Tom, glad of a chance to take Willie's part. 'It is downright mean, I think, to say such a thing of Willie Rogers.'

'Oh, do not mind what he says,' said Willie, now fully master of himself, 'I wonder I should have been so angry. But it came across me rather suddenly.'

So saying, he threw all the stones into the pond, and taking up his boat, walked round to the place where Mr. Benton and George were standing.

'Ha, ha! He has thrown all his rocks away, now. That shows plainly what he got 'em for!'

Willie looked over his shoulder, but it was neither a look of reproach, nor of defiance, that he cast at him. He even smiled, and his smile had nothing of disdain or scorn in it. It seem-

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ed to say, 'You are defeated, sir; I am master of myself, now.'

'I am glad to see you have recovered your self-possession,' said Mr. Benton, kindly patting his shoulder. '"He that ruleth his own spirit, is greater than he that taketh a city."'

Willie looked up and smiled, and then looked down and blushed. 'It was well I caught your eye when I did, sir,' he said, too honest to accept praise for self-control. 'But for that, I should have let drive that stone at Smith with all vengeance. That was just such a look as my mother would have given me.'

'I like you the better for being angry for such a cause,' said George, who had been to inquire into the matter. 'A boy who can hear himself called thief, and liar to boot, and be indifferent—I would not give a fig for him!'

Willie was pleased with George's sympathy. Still he felt there was a difference between indignation, and a spirit of revenge,—between a just resentment at an unfounded aspersion, and a desire to return evil for evil. He *felt* the difference; he was too young, however, to be able to define it. He merely said, 'I need not have been so fierce; Smith was only in fun, I

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suppose.' This did not satisfy his own mind, however.

'I must say, I was shocked,' said Mr. Benton. 'There was something frightful to me in seeing my good little Willie, whose face I can generally look upon with so much pleasure, expressing good will to all around, and peace within, so completely transformed. I hope I shall never see such a sight again.'

The kindness of Mr. Benton's reproof made the tears come into Willie's eyes. 'You never shall, sir,' rose to his lips, but he checked the hasty promise, for he had learned to distrust himself. He slipped his hand into his master's, and walked up the hill with him as he returned to the school premises.

PERSEVERANCE.

'MOTHER, I believe nobody ever had such a bad temper as I have, to contend with,' said Willie, as he was holding a skein of silk for her to wind.

'Why, Willie,' exclaimed she, laughing, 'you *are* a little tiger, to be sure!'

'I am in earnest, mother, and you would

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know it, if you had seen how mad I was this afternoon. Oh! I felt *really* savage!'

'O, I guess I should not have feared to cross your path! But what did you feel so cross about? Another slap on the cheek?'

'Worse than that? O! that was nothing to it!'

'Your little pug nose insulted?'

'Oh, mother! Just as if laughing at my nose would make me mad! Besides, my nose is a respectable little nose enough, I think.'

'I cannot guess, then. Your ears do not look as if they had been the sufferers.'

'Oh! poh! Mother!'

'Ah well, what was the mighty provocation?'

'I can tell you with a good face, since you think such trifles would be enough to put me in a passion.'

'Why, it is not such a great while since they did.'

'I know it,' said Willie.

'Do you not perceive that you have made some progress, then?'

'Yes. How I did want to give Tom a threshing! It makes me laugh to think of it. Tom would do any thing in the world for me now. He is a great deal better boy than he was, and never gets feruled now. I quite love him.'

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'So much for the effect of your bad temper.'

'My dear good mother, you think I have become very good tempered, and so did I. But I was mistaken. It was only that the boys had all left off plaguing me, and I had nothing to put me out.'

'How did you make them leave off troubling you?'

'I really don't know.'

'I do.'

'Why—I suppose they thought it would be mean to keep doing injuries to one who will never return one. It would be as cowardly as to strike a girl. And, then, the older boys taking a fancy to me, the rest do not want to get their ill will.'

'What could make them take a fancy to such an ill-natured, bad tempered boy?'

'I don't know,' said Willie, half smiling, 'they did not know me very well.'

'They continue to be your friends, it seems, now that they have had time to form a correct opinion of you.'

'I don't know why, I am sure; *I* do not like myself at all.'

'I am sorry you have done anything to offend Mr. Willie Rogers.'

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'How this silk does tangle! Cannot you break it, at once?'

'Oh, no! I have no thoughts of doing that. Do not be out of patience.'

'Not I. I am in no hurry. Only you will never be able to wind it, I think.'

'We shall see.'

Willie soon became quite interested in the disentanglement of the skein, and felt as if a victory had been won, when the whole had been wound without being once broken. 'Now, mother, let me tell you my story. You know that dear old gentleman, Mr. Brown, who lives next the school-house, and how often he has called me in, and sent you nice fruit from his garden, and has treated all the boys too, in school—'

His mother knew him very well, and could perfectly understand how unprepared Willie was for such an outrageous charge as that of robbing such a kind friend, and hiding the design under a mean stratagem.

'I never was insulted by such a suspicion before,' said the boy with sparkling eyes, 'and I cannot think of it even now, without anger.'

'That you never met with the same provocation before, is the very reason why you were not on your guard against it. Two or three

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years ago, you were just as much affronted, perhaps a dozen times a day, and fancied every time that you had good and just cause. You would even get out of all patience with puss, and I used to shut you up in the closet to reflect, you remember.'

'O, I was a *little* fellow, then.'

'So you are now, compared with George Murray.'

'I shall never outgrow my temper, I see plainly. I shall always be overset by every new thing that comes across me. I am too old to mind *little* things, that is all. I am in reality about the same.'

'Yes—and I hope you will remain so.'

'What—with no more command of myself than I have now!'

'That is not what I said—.'

'You puzzle me mother.'

'Let me see. How shall I make it plain to you? I will compare your temper to a fiery young colt. When he is well trained and broken in, so as not to be skittish or unmanageable, will he not make a nobler horse than one of less spirit?'

'Yes—he will do twice as much work. Poor old Sorrel, how he will tug up hill, and

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do his very best, even in his old age; and there is Bayard, fat and lazy, he will begin to walk as soon as he sees a rising ground at a distance, if you will let him.'

'I wish, then, that you may retain your warm and earnest feelings, even to your old age, but have them taught to obey the rein as well as the spur.'

'They never will, I am afraid.'

'Have you not more self-control than you had even six months ago? Think.'

'I have got used to many things that I could not bear very well then.'

'You can feel and behave as you ought, in general—under every-day temptations.'

'I have not been out of temper for a good while, much; at least, so as to show it by my actions, I believe.'

'Is nothing gained, then?'

'Oh, but, mother, what discourages me is this; as long as I live, I shall keep finding some new trial which will be too much for me.'

'I hope not. But, at any rate, you must learn to have patience with your own faults. Never give up, and you will succeed.'

'Just as we wound the silk, when I thought we *must* give it up.'

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'Perseverance works wonders. And, my dear boy, you can make even your failures sources of improvement.'

'How can I?'

'As long as you live among men, you must submit to have your actions misconstrued and judged harshly. Will not the remembrance of the first trial of the kind help you to bear it patiently?'

'I do not know. I do not feel as if I could bear it at all.'

'O, do not be discouraged. You will learn to endure it, just as you have learned to bear more trifling injuries.'

'I think it is an ill-natured world, then, and I wish I could always live with such people as you and father, and Sarah, and George Murray, and—and—'

'Rather a small circle, my dear boy. You could not do much good in the world, so shut up from it.'

'Do you think I shall be able to do much good?'

'Certainly, if you manfully do your part. Govern yourself, and show that you mean to govern yourself, by Christian principles, and you will be spreading that leaven which is to

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purify the whole world. You will be a part of that leaven.

'O, I will, dear mother. I will never give up. I will try to do as well as I know how. And now I feel happy. I will do what is right; and let them say of me what they will, I shall not mind it, as long as I know myself that I mean right. I think I can bear it in future.'

'Now run out and play. I think you must be tired, talking so long.'

'I am never tired of talking with you, mother, but my head aches. So I will go, and have a run before I tell you that I—'

'Run—run—there is Johnny, out there, and James Robinson.'

'Only, I am resolved that—'

'Tell me when you come back. You have been in the house a whole hour this fine day.

'One kiss, then,' said Willie, throwing his arms round her neck. 'O my dear, dear mother, with you to help me, I cannot fail to grow up a good man.'

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